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ABSTRACT

A brief introductory overview of career ladder programs in Tennessee, Utah, and North Carolina precedes a description of the California Mentor Teacher Program. The California Mentor Teacher Program was one of the reforms provided for in the comprehensive California Educational Reform Act of 1983. This fastback describes one such program, the Chula Vista City School School District Mentor Teacher Program. Salient points covered are: (1) how mentor teachers are selected; (2) the goals and objectives of the Chula Vista Mentor Program; (3) how the program works; (4) teacher reactions to the program; and (5) mentor teacher reactions to the program. (JD)



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# Mentor Teachers: The California Model

by
Roger G. Lowney

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# Introduction

California was quick to react to the National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983 report, *A Nation At Risk*, which sent shock waves throughout the nation, especially in the education community. Bill Honig, the newly elected California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, had already convinced the California electorate that educational reform was needed. The Commission's report only reinforced Honig's reform agenda outlined in the Comprehensive California Educational Reform Package, Senate Bill 813, which was approved by the legislature in 1983.

Included in the many reforms in SB 813 was a provision for a Mentor Teacher Program. The program's intent was to "encourage teachers currently employed in the public school system to continue to pursue excellence within their profession, to provide incentives to teachers of demonstrated ability and expertise to remain in the public school system, and to restore the teaching profession to its position of primary importance within the structure of the state educational system." A noble statement, indeed! But translating that statement into the implementation of a successful program would ultimately depend on effective local planning, genuine staff involvement, and a clear vision of how the program would operate.

The essence of the California Mentor Teacher Program is embodied in the legislative intent that the "primary function of a mentor

teacher shall be to provide assistance and guidance to new . . . and more experienced teachers." How local districts interpret this statement as they undertake implementation of mentor teacher programs will determine whether progress is made toward enhancing teaching as a profession and as a desirable career. In this fastback we shall look at one school district's response to the challenge offered by the California legislature. But before we do so, let us examine the national scene with regard to career ladder programs, of which mentor teachers is one type.

## Overview of Career Ladders for Teachers

California's Mentor Teacher Program is but one of a number of efforts on which several states and local school districts have embarked to make teaching more attractive as a career for beginning teachers and to provide incentives for experienced teachers to stay in the profession. These efforts include career ladders, master teacher programs, and various types of incentive or merit pay plans for exemplary teaching performance. Since 1983 such programs have been implemented to some degree in at least 15 states, and legislation for similar programs has been enacted in seven additional states.

Russell L. French, who is in charge of implementing Tennessee's career ladder program, argues that such programs provide "opportunities for talented artists to further refine their skills in program planning, mentorship, observation, conferencing, decision-making, and to use their skills and knowledge to help other teachers and learners" (French 1986). He goes on to state some justifications for the career ladder concept:

- Good teachers are bored silly and burned out after 5 or 10 or 15 years of the same old routine in the classroom.
- Mental and emotional stimulation results from undertaking new, complex, challenging tasks.
- The teaching of good teachers improves when they have had an opportunity to experience more aspects of the educational

world, reconceptualize their rules and activities, and take what they have learned back into their classrooms.

- Career development must include new tasks, new experiences, new thought patterns, and new ways to shape what teachers do every day.

Further justification comes from John Goodlad, who warns that unless something is done to change the "flatness" of the teaching profession, "we might as well resign ourselves to a permanent state of low pay for teachers and the continuation of teaching as a marginal profession" (Goodlad 1984, p. 313).

Career ladder plans vary with respect to state control, teacher involvement, bargainable issues, evaluation, and funding. Many states develop criteria to assist local districts in the design, implementation, and evaluation of career ladder programs. Others have allowed local districts nearly total control in program development. Utah provides for local planning with state guidelines. California allows local districts to develop their own plans as long as they meet certain legislative requirements; and it provides program advisory assistance from the state department of education.

Tennessee's career ladder program coordinates teacher evaluation and certification with career development, using a five-step ladder: Probationary, Apprentice, and Career Levels I, II, and III. For teachers certified and teaching in Tennessee prior to 2 July 1984, entering the program is optional. Teachers hired since that date are required to enter the program. Governor Lamar Alexander of Tennessee has been a driving force behind his state's career ladder program. Governor Alexander states:

> There is a blunt reason why the Legislature and I have made such a huge investment of our time and the taxpayer's money in the career ladder. Tennesseans need to catch up. Paying teachers more for teaching well will do that better than anything else. To have the best schools, we must keep and attract the best teachers and school leaders. Our career ladder program will offer the most prestigious, the most professional, and among the best paying teaching jobs in the country. (Furtwengler 1985)

Park City, Utah, utilizes a "permissive" evaluation system in which teachers choose the evidence they wish to submit to document their performance. Teachers are provided with monetary rewards for both additional duties and excellence in classroom performance. For classroom performance, teachers can select "lines" of evidence by which their evaluation is reported. The lines include: pupil reports, parent survey, peer review, teacher tests, systematic observation, administrator report, student gain data, professionalism, special service, and "other." This nonthreatening, permissive system by which teachers choose to be evaluated has resulted in an increased number of lines of evidence that are acceptable to teachers (Peterson and Mitchell 1985).

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, career ladder plan uses explicit expectations, continuous observations, and action-growth plans to give teachers a clear sense of direction. Teachers are evaluated on classroom performance, faculty performance, and professional performance. Teachers then move into a three-level career ladder based on performance in the above areas (Schlechty 1985).

## The California Mentor Teacher Program

California's career ladder concept is its Mentor Teacher Program, part of the Educational Reform Act of 1983. The program was funded at $10.8 million for 1983-84, $30.8 million for 1984-85, and $44.7 million for 1985-86. The 857 districts participating in the program in 1985-86 represent 83% of the 1,030 districts in the state, up from 741 (72%) in 1984-85 and 622 (64%) in 1983-84 (California State Department of Education 1986). Funding is on a formula basis that provides $4,000 for mentor teacher stipends and $2,000 per mentor for administration and implementation costs. More than 5,000 mentors currently are participating in the program statewide.

Enabling legislation authorizes stipends for up to 5% of the state's 180,000 teachers, but actual appropriation for 1985-86 ($44.7 million) was sufficient to support only 3.75% of the teachers employed statewide.

Mentor teachers, as defined by law, are appointed for one-, two-, or three-year terms. They must be tenured and have had recent classroom experience. A district selection committee, a majority of whose members are classroom teachers elected by their peers, nominates candidates for approval by the board of education. The only restrictions placed on mentors is that they must spend at least 60% of their time in direct instruction of students, and they may not evaluate other teachers.

FASTBACK

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# Mentor Teachers: The California Model

Roger G. Lowney

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All aspects of the mentor program are bargainable by the local teacher union except for the district's initial decision to participate in the program and the final approval of nominated mentors by the board. Differences in interpretation as to what is and is not negotiable led to delays in implementation of the program in some districts.

Drafters of the legislation authorizing the Mentor Teacher Program envisioned it as a way to accomplish several goals: 1) Provide extra pay for extra work, 2) Give recognition for excellence, 3) Provide guidance for new teachers, 4) Serve as a career ladder for experienced teachers, and 5) Provide a means for experienced teachers to upgrade their skills (Kaye 1985). However, implementation of the program on a statewide basis has raised several critical questions:

- How is the program perceived and received by administrators and teachers?
- What impact will collective bargaining have on implementing the program at the local level?
- What will mentors do to justify extra pay?
- How will teachers and other staff accept mentor teacher assistance?
- How will administrative support funds be utilized?
- What kind of training will be available for mentor teachers to perform effectively?
- Will the legislature continue funding the program?

Although legislation specified criteria by which mentors could be selected and, to some degree, what they could and could not do, there is no mention of the training that mentors would need to perform their new responsibilities. Once again, legislators, despite their good intentions, simply did not understand that mentor teachers need to be involved in a comprehensive training program if they are to be successful in their new role.

The obvious need for mentor training soon was recognized by the State Department of Education, county offices, and local districts. The California Institute for School Improvement, a private educational consulting firm based in Sacramento, has held numerous workshops on the role of the mentor including adult learning theory, effective

instructional strategies, overcoming teacher resistance to peer coaching, and a variety of other strategies to help mentors succeed. We cannot expect teachers to be plucked out of the security of their classrooms and begin somehow to work "magically" with colleagues in significant ways to improve instruction. It will take time, money, and determination for the theoretical concepts about mentor teachers envisioned by the legislature to be made operational "in the trenches" of local school districts.



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## Mentor Teachers: Who Are They and What Do They Do?

The derivation of the term "mentor" has an interesting history. According to Greek mythology, Odysseus left his family and kingdom to fight in the Trojan War. Odysseus was warned that, once gone on this mission, he could not return for 20 years. Odysseus entrusted his possessions and his son, Telemachus, to his close friend, Mentor. Mentor faithfully watched over Odysseus's interests and advised Telemachus. Thus, mentor has come to mean an experienced and trusted counselor.

According to research completed at the University of the Pacific in the spring of 1985, the typical California mentor teacher is a female elementary teacher in her late thirties who is active in professional organizations as well as subject-matter organizations. She earned her bachelor's degree in the California State University system or in an out-of-state institution, holds a master's degree, has been a teacher for 17 years, and earns a salary of $29,000. She wishes to remain in classroom teaching. The professional challenge and service to the profession provided by the mentorship was more important than the additional $4,000 stipend (Taylor 1986).

Mentors perform a variety of duties in their districts. Researchers at the Far West Laboratory reported that the five most commonly assigned mentor duties are:

1. Staff development or consultation with teachers on an individual request basis,
2. Conducting or facilitating school or district-level staff development,
3. Assisting teachers in locating and organizing curriculum materials,
4. Curriculum development in high priority areas, and
5. Classroom or other assistance to beginning teachers.

Business and industry have done most of the research on the mentor-protégé relationship and its effect on the productivity and professional success of those involved. A study by Clawson (1979) found that mentors are people-oriented, tolerate ambiguity, prefer abstract concepts, value their company and work, and respect and like their subordinates. Gray and Gray (1985), in their synthesis of research on mentoring beginning teachers, conclude that:

- Effective mentors are secure; they have power and expertise. They are people-oriented; they like and trust their protégés.
- Successful mentors take a personal interest in the careers of their protégés, encourage their ideas, and help them gain confidence in becoming self-directed professionals.
- Beginning teachers report needing help with discipline and classroom management, curriculum and lesson planning, and school routines. Most of all, they feel a need for moral support, guidance, and feedback.

Exemplary teaching performance is probably the key criterion by which mentor teachers are selected. But not to be overlooked is the mentor's willingness to grow and develop as a tolerant, patient, and perceptive individual whose reward is the personal satisfaction attained by performing mentor duties. A wise person once said, "Eliminate all job descriptions except that of salesperson." In the context of mentoring, this means being prepared and ready to perform, selling yourself and your expertise in a manner that is acceptable to the client teachers.

The mentor must be able to listen with three ears: 1) Listen to what a person says. 2) Listen to what a person does not say. 3) Listen to

what a person wants to say but does not know how to say. This all implies that mentors need training and time to grow. Magical transformation will not occur simply because a mentor teacher program is established. It will take time, commitment, and follow-up to ensure good results.

Let us turn now to how one California school system implemented its Mentor Teacher Program.


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# The Chula Vista City School District Mentor Teacher Program

The Chula Vista City School District (CVCSD) lies just southeast of San Diego, stretching from the San Diego Bay east to the Laguna Mountains. The district serves approximately 15,000 K-6 children with a minority enrollment of 58% (mostly Hispanic), who are instructed by 650 teachers. The district has long been known for exemplary and innovative instructional programs, although in recent years severe funding reductions have resulted in program cutbacks and employee unrest.

Soon after the California Mentor Teacher Program went into effect on 1 January 1984, the Chula Vista Board of Education unanimously passed a resolution in March of 1984 to participate, with the following broad program goals:

1. To provide teachers with support, assistance, recognition, and professional opportunities.

2. To continue the pursuit of excellence in teaching skills of new and experienced teachers through effective staff and curriculum development.

3. To provide optimum learning opportunities for all students.

The resolution included the provision to invite teachers, parents, curriculum staff, and principals to develop a program designed to meet district goals. Mentor responsibilities were to:

1. Acquire the expertise to become trainers for staff development activities.
2. Assist in development of effective teaching techniques and strategies.
3. Assist in improving teaching skills in identified program areas.
4. Assist in curriculum development and evaluation.

As stated earlier, the California Mentor Teacher Program was included in the massive educational reform bill known as SB-813. More than $3.2 billion in new money was pumped into public schools. Despite the increased state funding, many teacher unions were hesitant to embrace the reform package, particularly the Mentor Teacher Program because of its merit pay connotations.

Immediately after the board adopted the resolution to participate, a demand to negotiate the program was received from the Chula Vista Elementary Education Association (CVEEA); and it became part of the 1984-85 collective bargaining package. Although the CVEEA went on record as opposing the program, it pledged to negotiate the board's proposal in good faith.

In January 1985, a new contract was negotiated that included provision for the Mentor Teacher Program. The mentor teacher selection committee was formed and immediately set about the time-consuming and difficult task of nominating 17 teachers to submit to the board for approval. The selection committee's work was completed in May 1985, and the board unanimously approved the 17 mentors nominated by the committee.

## How Mentor Teachers Are Selected

The California Education Code clearly spells out provisions for the structure of the mentor teacher selection committee in the following sections:

> 44495. The selection procedures for the designation of certificated classroom teachers as mentor teachers shall, at a minimum, provide for the following:
>
> (a) A selection committee shall be established to nominate candidates for selection as mentor teachers. The majority of the committee

shall be composed of certificated classroom teachers chosen to serve on the committee by other certificated classroom teachers. The remainder of the committee shall be composed of school administrators, chosen to serve on the committee by other school administrators. The governing board of a participating school district shall consider including parents, pupils, or other public representatives in the selection process, and may, at its option, include such persons.

(b) Candidates for mentor teacher shall be nominated by the majority vote of the selection committee.

(c) The selection process shall include provisions for classroom observation of candidates by administrators and classroom teachers employed by the district.

(d) The final designation of any person as a mentor teacher shall be by action of the governing board of the school district from persons nominated pursuant to subdivision (b). The governing board may reject any nominations.

44496. (a) Persons designated as mentor teachers pursuant to this article shall be assigned duties and responsibilities in accordance with the following:

(1) The primary function of a mentor teacher shall be to provide assistance and guidance to new teachers. A mentor teacher may also provide assistance to more experienced teachers.

(2) Mentor teachers may provide staff development for teachers, and may develop special curriculum.

(3) A mentor teacher shall not participate in the evaluation of teachers.

(b) No administrative or pupil personnel services credential shall be required of any mentor teacher. Each mentor teacher shall spend, on the average, not less than 60% of his or her time in the direct instruction of pupils.

Article 56 of Chula Vista's collective bargaining agreement provides for an eleven-member Mentor Teacher Selection Committee, including six classroom teachers elected by a majority vote of teachers and five administrators selected by the superintendent. Members serve for three years.

Mentor teacher candidates nominate themselves for a three-year term and must meet the following criteria as set forth in the negotiated agreement:

- Demonstrate exemplary teaching ability as indicated by effective communications skills, subject matter knowledge, mastery of a range of teaching strategies, and other special skills and abilities.
- Believe in the value of teaching as a profession.
- Be committed to enhancing the status of teachers.
- Have the respect of their colleagues.
- Hold high expectations for students.
- Convey enthusiasm for learning to teachers and students.
- Believe that all children can learn and succeed.
- Foster the maximum intellectual and social development of each child.
- Demonstrate initiative.
- Have courage to share ideas and initiate change.
- Demonstrate ability to plan and organize.

The selection committee rates each candidate based on data from the application, personnel file review, personal interview, and classroom teaching observation. Following the rating of each candidate, round-robin discussions are conducted in which committee members can comment individually on candidates' strengths and weaknesses. Finally, 17 teachers are nominated by majority vote of the selection committee to be submitted to the board for approval.

Mentor teachers may not exceed an average of 21 days of released time from their regular teaching assignments during any school year. Their assignments are made from the office of the assistant superintendent for instruction. The board of education may remove any mentor teacher at the end of the school year for failure to perform in a satisfactory manner.

The CVCSD Mentor Teacher Program embodies a philosophy that says in part:

> The District's most important resource for improvement of student growth and achievement are dedicated, imaginative people who have a commitment to quality education. The teacher who is in touch with the classroom reality is best suited to transfer the excitement and knowledge to others . . . the development of the collaborative spirit is central to the Mentor Teacher Program.

This collaborative spirit is the exemplified by the selection committee, where administrators and teachers work side by side to select the very best candidates to participate in this exciting new venture.

## Chula Vista Mentor Teachers Go to Work

Even before the Mentor Teacher Program was formally adopted, Chula Vista administrators were convinced that quality training of mentor teachers should be the top priority of the district. They visited the Long Beach Unified School District's Professional Development Center to see firsthand how a highly successful teacher/administrator training center operated, especially its program using the concepts developed by Madeline Hunter. The committee was impressed with the Long Beach program and agreed that mentor teachers would best be served by such training prior to working with district staff.

Consultants were contracted to train mentors in Madeline Hunter's "Principles of Learning." These principles provided mentors with a solid understanding of how children learn and gave them a new theme for their mentor training: "Teaching is a stream of decision-making." Clinical supervision skills were next, followed by workshops in adult learning theory, cooperative learning, critical thinking, thematic teaching, and a variety of content area workshops to complement the mentor's expertise.

The hard part, of course, was yet to come – developing credibility with their peers. Presenting oneself as being exemplary among one's peers is not easy. It takes courage. It means taking risks. It means hard work. It means sacrificing time with family and friends.

Subcommittees of the mentor teacher group began working on a *Mentor Teacher Directory* to explain the program to district staff. The following list of goals and objectives from the *Directory* will give the reader some notion of the various ways the mentor teachers work in the Chula Vista City School District.

**Goal I. To provide individual and small group assistance and guidance to new and experienced staff.**

*Objective 1.* At the beginning of every year, mentors will

be available to assist and guide staff in the essential elements of classroom instruction.

*Sample Activities:* Assist staff during pre-school workshop days. Meet with Leadership Team during workshop days before school starts.

*Objective 2.* Throughout the school year mentor teachers will be available to guide and assist teachers.

*Sample Activities:* Schedule demonstration lessons that follow precepts of Essential Elements of Effective Instruction. Distribute schedule for demonstration lessons districtwide. Videotape demonstration lessons. Present training in Essential Elements of Effective Instruction. Develop demonstration lessons to integrate various areas of the curriculum. Assist teachers with new assignments.

*Evaluation:* Log of activities conducted by mentors. Surveys of participants in sessions directed by mentors. Annual survey by mentors and administrators regarding mentor program. Photographs, slides, or videotapes of sessions conducted by mentors. Presentations to Board, Leadership Team, and at appropriate conferences regarding mentor activities.

**Goal II. To conduct staff development programs, as requested by school faculties.**

*Objective 1.* By the end of each school year, mentor teachers will have conducted training activities with school faculties.

*Sample Activities:* Conduct presentations in the Essential Elements of Effective Instruction at staff meetings. Conduct teacher training sessions in a variety of curriculum areas, as related to the course of study and state frameworks. Conduct training sessions in classroom management skills.

*Objective 2.* Disseminate curriculum materials and inservice schedules to all staff.

*Sample Activities:* Edit a monthly newsletter that contains a schedule of inservice programs. Write newsletter items pertaining to a variety of subject areas, events for students and teachers, and useful teaching ideas.

*Evaluation:* Log of staff development programs conducted by mentors. Survey of participants in staff programs. Photographs of mentor activities.

**Goal III. To design, conduct, and evaluate educational programs and materials.**

*Objective 1.* Throughout the school year, mentors may assist in the development and evaluation of programs and curriculum materials at the request of district management staff.

*Sample Activities:* Participate in planning and directing summer school programs for students. Participate in planning and conducting summer teacher training programs. Participate in textbook selection. Participate in curriculum committee meetings.

*Evaluation:* Copies of curriculum materials developed by mentors. Descriptions of programs designed and conducted by mentors. Log of activities of mentors. Survey of teachers, mentors, and administrators regarding programs and materials.

**Goal IV. To continue professional growth for mentors.**

*Objective 1.* During the school year, mentors will participate in activities that promote their professional growth.

*Sample Activities:* Attend appropriate subject area conferences. Attend training sessions as appropriate or needed. Independent study.

*Evaluation:* Log of activities. Evaluation of professional growth activities by mentors.

## How the Program Works

The Chula Vista Mentor Teacher Program focuses on teachers helping teachers. The program is voluntary, and only teachers can request the services of a mentor or mentors. Mentors are available for individual assistance or for staff inservice sessions.

When a teacher wants the assistance of a mentor, he or she fills out a Mentor Teacher Request Form, signs it, and submits it to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction's office for approval. When approved, a copy of the Request Form is then returned to the teacher requesting assistance. Feedback and evaluation forms are prepared

by the teacher and returned to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction as soon as possible after the mentor has completed the assignment.

In its first year, the program had accomplished the following:

- Mentor teachers had 102 requests for assistance in the schools.
- Mentor teachers spent 6,374 hours on mentor teaching functions.
- Mentor teachers spent 2,679 hours attending inservice training.
- Mentor teachers presented 89 workshops during professional growth days.
- 275 members of the staff attended professional growth workshops during the first semester of the school year.
- 120 members of the staff attended professional growth workshops during the second semester of the school year.

## Teacher Reactions to the Mentor Teacher Program

Following are comments culled from teacher feedback forms that are typical of the many positive responses to the work of the mentors:

> She has done an excellent job in presenting the beginning lessons in Meology. She is a terrific teacher. I have greatly enjoyed working with her.

> Excellent. She did all she could in the required time. She was happy to work with three other classes, too. A VERY positive instructor.

> I saw exactly what I needed to see to begin implementation here.

> Not only were my objectives met, but he continues to send me information and ideas.

> Staff now has a better idea of what writing across the curriculum is and what the State Framework for Writing is really about.

> I watched a demonstration and was given a handout; that was what I was asking for. She was effective and helpful. I wouldn't hesitate to call on her again.

## Mentor Teacher Reactions to the Program

Mentors were asked to write a candid statement regarding their thoughts about the Mentor Teacher Program. Following are samples of the statements:

I feel the Mentor Teacher Program is a professional partnership of teachers helping teachers become more effective in the classroom.

The future of education lies with teachers' willingness to share ideas and teaching strategies with each other.

I consider it a privilege to work with my colleagues in an exciting, innovative program for teachers.

I see the Mentor Teacher Program as a unique opportunity for teachers to share and to exchange ideas with other teachers in our common pursuit of excellence in education.

I consider the Mentor Teacher Program to be the most powerful effort ever initiated to upgrade the educational process and status of teachers as they avail themselves of the training and services offered.

The Mentor Teacher Program provides an exciting opportunity for open communication and professional growth among teachers. I am excited and eager to be a part of it.

I consider the Mentor Teacher Program to be very important and timely for education. And it can be a real shot in the arm for those of us who need the encouragement/support of our peers. It is, after all, teachers helping teachers.

The Mentor Teacher Program acts as a catalyst for teachers to share their ideas and experience with fellow teachers, enabling them to grow professionally and thus improve the education for students throughout the district.

When teachers share their unique talents, there is a sense of electricity in the air. The Mentor Program provides an environment for this excitement to occur. It brings teachers together to share and grow professionally.

The Mentor Teacher program provides an opportunity for professional growth utilizing a collegial approach. I am very proud to be a part of this program.

## Conclusion

With the passage of California's massive educational reform package in 1983, several noteworthy programs have been launched; of these, the Mentor Teacher Program may be the most significant of all. The concept of mentoring teachers and allowing teachers to assume leadership positions has been received with suspicion by some and has created insecurity in others. However, there is no turning back now. The program has grown quickly and with solid credibility in those districts that have focused on the legislative intent, "teachers assisting new and experienced teachers to improve their instructional skills in the classroom." Quality training and state and local commitment to support the teachers pioneering this new concept will be a key factor in program success.

The California Commission on the Teaching Profession in its report, *Who Will Teach Our Children?* (1985), has recommended that the Mentor Teacher Program be strengthened. The report recommends that the mentor program should be a definite career move, instead of a short-term assignment as under current law. A key point in the report is that "A mentor should be strictly limited to providing one-on-one coaching in the classroom, or seminars and workshops for teaching residents, probationary teachers and for experienced colleagues." The report concludes that the mentor program is especially significant because it carries the promise of a major shift toward greater

professional cooperation among teachers and toward leadership by teachers in developing standards of excellence for the profession.

The California Round Table on Educational Opportunity in its report, *Improving the Attractiveness of the K-12 Teaching Profession in California* (1983), recommends that more flexible career ladders be established. "New career ladders for teachers might allow them to remain part-time in the classroom, while having the opportunity to be rewarded professionally and economically for specialized training, study, and ability in various other educational roles."

Judith Warren Little, senior program director of the Far West Laboratory, has stated, "Teachers must take the lead. It is increasingly implausible that we could improve schools, retain excellent teachers, and make sensible demands upon administrators without promoting leadership in teaching by teachers" (1986).

The California Mentor Teacher Program has been hailed by several prominent state educators as the most significant educational change in California in 20 years. The program has merit. It has strong support from those teachers participating in it. It holds the promise of improving the profession and education in general. We must seize this opportunity to help make the profession a more exciting and attractive career for young people.

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